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resented nearly all the regions of the globe— even some of the most remote and inaccessible. The specimens are in fine condition, but mostly unmounted. The University accepts them on Mr. Bennett's terms, which are simply that they be mounted, cased and properly cared for; also, that they be made available to botanical students under proper restrictions. Mr. W. W. Bailey, since 1877 Instructor of Botany at Brown, has now the additional title and duties of Curator of the Herbaria. The united collections of Messrs. Olney, Bennett and Bailey, make a nucleus of which any institution might be proud. It is well known that Mr. Olney was a specialist of high rank in the study of *Carex* and his collection of Carices must remain classic. The herbarium is, however, rich in American botany generally, and contains some fine special *suites*, as Robbin's *Potamogetons*, Sullivant's and Austin's Mosses, Wright's Cuban Plants, Hall and Thurber's and Fendler's collections, &c. Accompanying *Carex* are the exquisite colored drawings by J. H. Emerton, made under Mr. Olney's direction, to illustrate his projected monograph of the genus. Valuable notes accompany these. Mr. Olney's botanical correspondence covers many years and is of peculiar interest. It contains letters from all the leading botanists of America.

The curator takes pleasure in calling attention to the Brown University Herbarium, and asks aid of his scientific friends in increasing and extending its usefulness. Every courtesy will be extended to visiting botanists.—J. M. C.

DEATH OF AN OLD BOTANIST.—Dr. S. B. Mead died at his home in Augusta, Illinois, Nov. 11th, 1880, in the 82d year of his age. He was born in Connecticut, graduated from Yale College in 1820, and in 1834 settled in Augusta. In the practice of his profession, taking long rides over the prairies in every direction, he had an opportunity to study the flora of the region before it was disturbed by cultivation. He collected largely and made some interesting discoveries, his best find being *Asclepias Meadii*, which is a rare plant in collections even now. He exchanged with the leading botanists of the past generation and did not lose his interest in botany up to the day of his death. The writer visited him last spring, found him active and in good spirits and took pleasure in looking through his collection with him. His death was caused by a fall several weeks previous, but he was able to be about until the last and died with very little suffering. His collection includes many interesting Western and Southern plants gathered by Hall, Lindheimer, Ravenel, T. J. Hale, M. A. Curtis, Dr. Short and others. It would make a valuable present to some college, or would enrich the herbarium of almost any private collector. It will be disposed of together with his botanical library, by his widow, Mrs. S. B. Mead, Augusta, Ill.—\*

CONTRIBUTORS to Mr. S. T. Olney's *Carices Boreali Americana* are requested to communicate at once with Mr. James L. Bennett, of Providence, R. I., who has been requested by President Robinson,

of Brown University, to which Mr. Olney gave his botanical collection by will, to complete the distribution so far as the plants received and determined by the testator will allow. Mr. Bennett, in assisting me with his great experience, has had sole charge of *Carex* and brought neatness and order out of much that was chaotic. He will be prompt to respond to any and all inquiries.—W. W. BAILEY, *Curator, Brown University Herbarium.*

RECENT PUBLICATIONS.—*Check-List of North American Gamopetalæ after Compositæ*—This is a very neatly printed pamphlet of 12 pages, published by Harry N. Patterson, Oquawka, Ill. Mr. Patterson's printing is well enough known to be its own recommendation and the list given will be of very great use. We very much need a new and complete check-list of all our North American Phænogams and Vascular Cryptogams, with every species numbered as in M nn's Catalogue. It is vastly more convenient to write out a list of numbers than of long botanical names. For price see the advertisement.

*Practical Uses of the Microscope*—This is included in the Inaugural Address of Dr. R. H. Ward to the American Society of Microscopists. No one could be much better fitted for speaking upon such a subject than Dr. Ward. The practical use most largely spoken of is what may be called the legal use, such as the examination of signatures, etc. With considerable curiosity we looked through the pamphlet to see the opinion of such high authority concerning the practical importance of the binocular arrangement. This is what we found: "The binocular arrangement has grown from an experiment of disputed value to a priceless luxury if not a literal necessity." We would like very much to know from our working histologists how much they use the binocular arrangement, and if they use it at all, with what powers.

*On the Microscopic Crystals Contained in Plants.*—Mr. W. K. Higley, of Ann Arbor, has been examining a great many plants with reference to their crystals and the results are brought together in this paper, a reprint from the *American Naturalist*. The crystals are considered under the three heads of Raphides, Sphæraphides and Crystal prisms. These names have already been defined in a previous no ice, but it may be said further that Mr. Higley's observations seem to show that the raphides are composed of phosphate of lime, the acicular or crystal prisms of oxalate of lime, the cubical crystals of carbonate of lime, the sphæraphides of the same base combined with different acids according to locality. The author thinks that their great abundance would point to some use to the plant itself. Two uses to man are suggested, first, that the phosphates these crystals contain may strengthen bones, and second, through decaying leaves and stems they act as a fertilizer. A list of 71 phænogamous families is given, known to contain crystals, 46 being exogenous and 25 endogenous.

*Useful and Noxious Plants.*—This is the first annual report upon this subject by Prof. T. J. Burrill, Botanist of the Illinois State Board